

Capsule Summary
SM-458
Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
Valley Lee
Private

Circa 1860 -1880

The Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House is significant as a rural farmhouse built by a free black man in the 1860s or 1870s. According to oral history accounts, the house also served as a bar or dance hall for the local African-American community in the late 1800s or early 1900s. While the house retains its original exterior siding and interior plan, it is currently in poor repair.

Thomas F. Barnes, described as a "free man of colour," purchased a 60 acre parcel of "Bennett's Delight" in 1857. In 1869, Barnes purchased an additional 48 acres of land under the name of Thomas F. Jordan. By the time of his death in 1892, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan owned 178 acres of land comprised of parts of "Bennett's Delight," "Watts Lodge," "Kendricks Lane," "Part Poverty," "Hogs Confusion," and "The Hawks Nest."

The Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House is one of the few examples of a domestic structure constructed for a free black to be documented in the Valley Lee district. Based upon his gradual accumulation of property and his record of public service, Thomas F. Jordan appears to have been a well-respected and influential person within the community. Following Jordan family ownership of the property, the farm was occupied by a white family. While the farmland continues to be cultivated, the house now lies vacant.

SM-458, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Agricultural Industrial Transition, 1815 - 1870.
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930.

Historic Period Theme: Architecture
Agriculture
African-American History

Resource Type

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: House

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. **SM 458**

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common **Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House**

2. Location

street & number **Route 244**☐ not for publicationcity, town **Valley Lee**☒ vicinity of

congressional district

5state **Maryland**county **St. mary's**

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> otherStorage

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name **George R. Adams Jr. & Donna Adams**street & number **Route 4 Box 579**telephone no.: **(301) 475 3189**city, town **Hollywood**state and zip code **Maryland 20636**

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. **St. Mary's County Courthouse**liber **DA 733**

street & number

folio **1**city, town **Leonardtown**state **Maryland**

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Survey No. SM 458

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 4

The Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House is located at the end of an unpaved road on the west side of Route 244 near Valley Lee in St. Mary's County, Maryland. Four outbuildings are located on the west side of the house. The house is surrounded on all sides by cultivated fields. The house faces east with the gable roof oriented on a north/south axis.

The main block of the Thomas F. B. Jordan House appears to have been built in the 1860s or 1870s. A two-story wing was added to the west side of the house at a later date. Both the main block and addition to the Thomas F. B. Jordan House are supported by wood piers. These piers have deteriorated over the years, causing the floor of the house to sink. The exterior of the house is sheathed with weatherboard siding. The roof, originally covered with wood shingles, is now covered with seamed metal. Only the one-story addition to the main block is roofed with wood shingles.

The east (main) elevation is pierced by two entrance doors and two six-over-one sash windows. Both of the doors are replacements but their surrounds, finished with an interior bead, are original. A porch extends across the first floor of the house. This porch is a replacement or later addition as it is composed of particle board and metal screening. The floor is a cement pad. The second floor of the house is pierced by four six-over-six sash windows with beaded surrounds. A one-story shed addition with a wood shingle roof extends to the south of the main block. This kitchen and bathroom wing, which replaced an earlier one-story wing, was constructed by the Hewitts around 1930. It is pierced by one six-over-one sash window with wide surrounds.

The south elevation of the main block is blind except for a small four-light window which pierces the eave. The shed roof addition is pierced by two six-over-one sash windows. One of these has wide surrounds and the other is located in an opening which formerly served as a doorway. The south side of the addition which extends to the west of the main block is pierced by a one-light-over-three-panel door and a six-over-one-sash window with wide surrounds on the first floor. The second floor is pierced by two six-over-six sash windows with wide surrounds.

The west elevation of the main block is pierced by one six-over-one sash window on the first floor and one six-over-six sash window on the second floor. The remaining three bays of the main block are obscured by the two-story, western addition. The gable end of this addition is blind. An exterior, cinderblock chimney stands against the wing. A shed roof addition pierced by a vertical panel door projects from the first floor of the gable end. This addition was built in the 1960s as a furnace

8. Significance

Survey No. SM 458

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) African American

Specific dates Unknown

Builder/Architect Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House is significant as a rural farmhouse built by a free black man in the 1860s or 1870s. According to oral history accounts, the house also served as a bar or dance hall for the local African-American community in the late 1800s or early 1900s. While the house retains its original exterior siding and interior plan, it is currently in poor repair.

Thomas F. Barnes, described as a "free man of colour," purchased a 60 acre parcel of "Bennett's Delight" in 1857. In 1869, Barnes purchased an additional 48 acres of land under the name of Thomas F. Jordan. By the time of his death in 1892, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan owned 178 acres of land comprised of parts of "Bennett's Delight," "Watts Lodge," "Kendricks Lane," "Part Poverty," "Hogs Confusion," and "The Hawks Nest."

Thomas F. Barnes Jordan is listed in the census as resident in the Valley Lee district from 1850 until his death in the 1880s. Listed as Thomas "Jorden" in the 1850 census, he is described as a 35 year old mulatto farmer. His wife Mary and four children, including George, Joseph, Alexander, and John, are also listed. In 1860 Thomas "Jourdan" is described as a farmer with wife Mary and children George, Joseph, Jerry, and Rachel. His personal property is valued at \$250 while his real property is valued at \$700. In 1870 Thomas "Jordon" and wife Mary have four children in the household including Jerry, Alleweser, Thomas, and James. His personal property is valued at \$395 and his real property is valued at \$1350. In 1880 Thomas Jordan's wife is listed as "Elizabeth A." His children Thomas, James, and Mary are resident in the household at this time.

Thomas Jordan's name appears regularly in the St. Mary's Beacon throughout the 1870s and 1880s. In 1870 Jordan is listed as a registered voter. In 1874 he is selected as one of the delegates from the second district to attend the county Republican Party Convention. In 1880 he is appointed a Road Supervisor for the second district by the county commissioners. In 1883 and 1885 Jordan is appointed as a "colored school Trustee."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. **SM 458**

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3 AcresQuadrangle name Piney PointQuadrangle scale 1: 24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Acreage Surrounding House

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Sites Surveyororganization St. Mary's County Planning & Zoningdate October 1994street & number 328 Washington Streettelephone (301) 475 4662city or town Leonardtownstate Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

SM-458, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

and freezer room. The north elevation of the addition is pierced by two six-over-one sash windows with wide surrounds on both the first and second floors. The gable end of the main block is blind.

The interior of the house has been largely altered. The main block consists of two rooms on the first floor separated by a partition wall. Originally finished with plaster walls and ceilings, these rooms began to be sheathed with modern wood paneling and fitted with a dropped ceiling in the late 1960s and early 1970s. An interior chimney stack is located against the exterior wall of each room. The interior door and window surrounds are plain. A kitchen and bathroom are located in the addition off of the south parlor. A door in both parlors opens to a closet under the stair which is located on the south side of the partition wall. This stair was reoriented to rise from east to west in the 1930s. The original stair was located in the same position but rose from west to east and may have been an enclosed winder stair. The addition to the west of the main block consists of one large room with a mantel against the west wall. The modest mantel has plain pilasters which flank the firebox and a plain mantel shelf. Here the original plaster ceiling is visible through a hole in the dropped ceiling. The floor of this room is slightly higher than that of the main block.

The stair leads to a hallway on the second floor of the two-story addition. The second floor interior of the main block consists of two bedrooms which are located at a slightly lower level than the hall. An interior brick chimney is located against the exterior wall of each room. A vertical panel door with horizontal battens and wire nails in the southwest corner of the south bedroom opens to a ladder which provides access to the attic. A four-panel door on the east end of the partition wall that separates the two bedrooms provides access between them. Two bedrooms are located on the second floor of the western addition.

The attic reveals interior brick chimney stacks at either end of the main block. These chimneys were slightly shortened and covered by the roof in 1960. They are not visible from the exterior and are no longer usable. The timbers exposed in the attic are circular sawn. Both wire nails and mature machine cut nails have been used here.

Four outbuildings are located on the property. Located closest to the house is the smokehouse. This gable roof structure faces east with the roof oriented on an east/west axis. The foundation of the smokehouse consists of wood piers. The exterior is sheathed with circular sawn weatherboard attached with mature machine cut nails. The roof is covered with wood shingles. A vertical plank door hung with machine made metal hinges pierces the east elevation of the smokehouse. The door jamb has been nailed into place with mature machine cut nails. The interior of the building consists of skinned log studs and cornerposts. The top plates are hewn. A hewn beam imbedded with wire nails extends across the center of the building from

SM-458, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
St. Mary's County
7.2 Description

the west top plate to the east top plate. The floor of the building consists of plywood.

A second outbuilding is sheathed with board and batten siding and roofed with metal. The foundation consists of cinderblock piers. This building was constructed sometime after 1925 and is currently being used for the storage of corn. A third outbuilding is a granary flanked by storage sheds on either side. Located to the south of the house, the granary faces east with the roof oriented on an east/west axis. The granary is supported by wood piers and is roofed with metal. Hay is stored in the northern shed while farm equipment is stored in the southern shed. A tobacco barn stands next to the granary. Although originally associated with the Thomas F. B. Jordan House, this barn is now located on land owned by the adjoining property owner.

SM-458, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

Jordan's wife and son are also listed in the local paper. Following his son's appointment as steward of the Oyster Police Steamer Governor Thomas, a September 9, 1886 issue of the Beacon notes, "the place is a good paying one and those who know him say that it has been given to a good man." Mrs. Jordan's death is noted in the St. Mary's Beacon of February 7, 1889. The paper describes her as a "good and true Christian."

In 1892 Jordan died and devised his home farm to two of his sons, James H. and Thomas F. Jordan. In 1902, Thomas Jordan, by then a Baltimore resident, transferred his interest in the property to his brother. In 1914, James Jordan sold the property to Lewis R. Springer. Ten years later, the Springers sold 131 acres to William Vernon Hewitt.

The Hewitt family owned this house until the 1990s. William V. Hewitt was a long time resident of Valley Lee while his wife Lettie was from the Park Hall area. The Hewitts met at a dance on St. George's Island, courted for about one year, and married. The Hewitts had one child together and adopted a second child. Mr. Hewitt was a farmer and also did some carpentry work on the side. His multi-talented wife raised turkeys and chickens, repaired shoes, upholstered furniture, and sewed.

Photographs dating to the early years of Hewitt's ownership show the house with a one-story, two-bay, gable roof wing off of the main block's south elevation where the shed roof kitchen wing stands today. According to Lettie A. Hewitt, now deceased, the first floor of the rear two-story wing was used as a dance hall prior to their purchase of the dwelling. Here, chairs were lined up along the walls and a bar was located at one end of the room.

Outbuildings on the property during the Hewitt family ownership included two tobacco barns, a stable, a granary, a chicken house, a meathouse, and an outhouse. A white picket fence originally surrounded the house lot. A dinner bell was located in the yard and was rung for the dinner and supper hour. If it was rung at any other time, it signaled an emergency to the Valley Lee community.

The Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House is one of the few examples of a domestic structure constructed for a free black to be documented in the Valley Lee district. Based upon his gradual accumulation of property and his record of public service, Thomas F. Jordan appears to have been a well-respected and influential person within the community. Following Jordan family ownership of the property, the farm was occupied by a white family. While the farmland continues to be cultivated, the house now lies vacant.

SM-458, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: George R. Adams Jr. and Donna Marie Adams
FROM: Elizabeth Ellen Hewitt
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber EWA 733, folio 1.
DATE: December 2, 1992.
NOTES: Transfer of property being part of MRB 29/455, the same of which William Franklin Hewitt died possessed on April 14, 1991.

TO: William Franklin Hewitt and Elizabeth Ellen Hewitt
FROM: Lettie A. Hewitt
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber MRB 29, folio 455.
DATE: November 1, 1978
NOTES: Transfer of property subject to the life estate of Lettie A. Hewitt in the house and 1.5 acres on which the house is located. This tract constitutes the home farm of the late Thomas F. Barnes, alias Thomas F. Jordan and consists of 131 acres being "Part of Poverty," "Part of Hogs or Hugs Confusion," "Part of Hawks Nest," "Part of Bennett's Delight," and "Part of Combs Chance."

TO: Lettie A. Hewitt
FROM: William Vernon Hewitt
RECORD: St. Mary's County Testamentary Record, Liber MRB 5, folio 162.
DATE: February 8, 1967.
NOTES: Transfer of all my estate, both real and personal.

TO: William Vernon Hewitt and Lettie A. Hewitt
FROM: Lewis R. Springer and Lena E. Springer of Baltimore City.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JMM 3, folio 31.
DATE: December 13, 1924.
NOTES: Transfer of 131 acres.

TO: Lewis R. Springer
FROM: James H. Jordan and Maggie Jordan
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber EBA 12, folio 233.
DATE: February 3, 1914.
NOTES: Transfer of 178 acres. Price: \$2900

TO: James H. Jordan
FROM: Thomas F. Jordan and Catharine A.S. Jordan of Baltimore
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber EBA 2, folio 445.
DATE: June 3, 1902.

SM-458, Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

NOTES: Transfer of Thomas Jordan's interest in the property devised to him by his father in JBA 1/245. Price: \$550

TO: James H. Jordan and Thomas F. Jordan

FROM: Thomas Barnes alias Jordan

RECORD: St. Mary's County Testamentary Records, Liber JBA 1, folio 245.

DATE: February 23, 1892.

NOTES: "to my two sons Thomas and James I give and devise the home farm on which I now reside..."

TO: Thomas Francis Barnes alias Jordan

FROM: Benjamin Foxwell, Sheriff

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JFF 7, folio 21.

DATE: October 16, 1883.

NOTES: Sale of property as a result of a Circuit Court execution dated June 28, 1880 in the case of Robert C. Combs and James B. Downs vs. James T. Milburn, Benjamin Hewitt, J.J. Allston and James C. Bean. Transfer of "Bennett's Delight" and "Watts Lodge" being 226 acres, "Kendricks Lane," "Part Poverty," and "Hogs Confusion" being 46 acres.

TO: Thomas F. Jordan

FROM: John H. Milburn Sr. and Caroline Milburn; John H. Milburn Jr. and Mary S. Milburn

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JAC 3, folio 429.

DATE: January 25, 1869.

NOTES: Transfer of part of the tracts "Poverty," "The Hogs Confusion," "The Hawks Nest," and "Bennett's Delight" being 48 acres. Price: \$200

TO: Thomas F. Barnes, free man of colour.

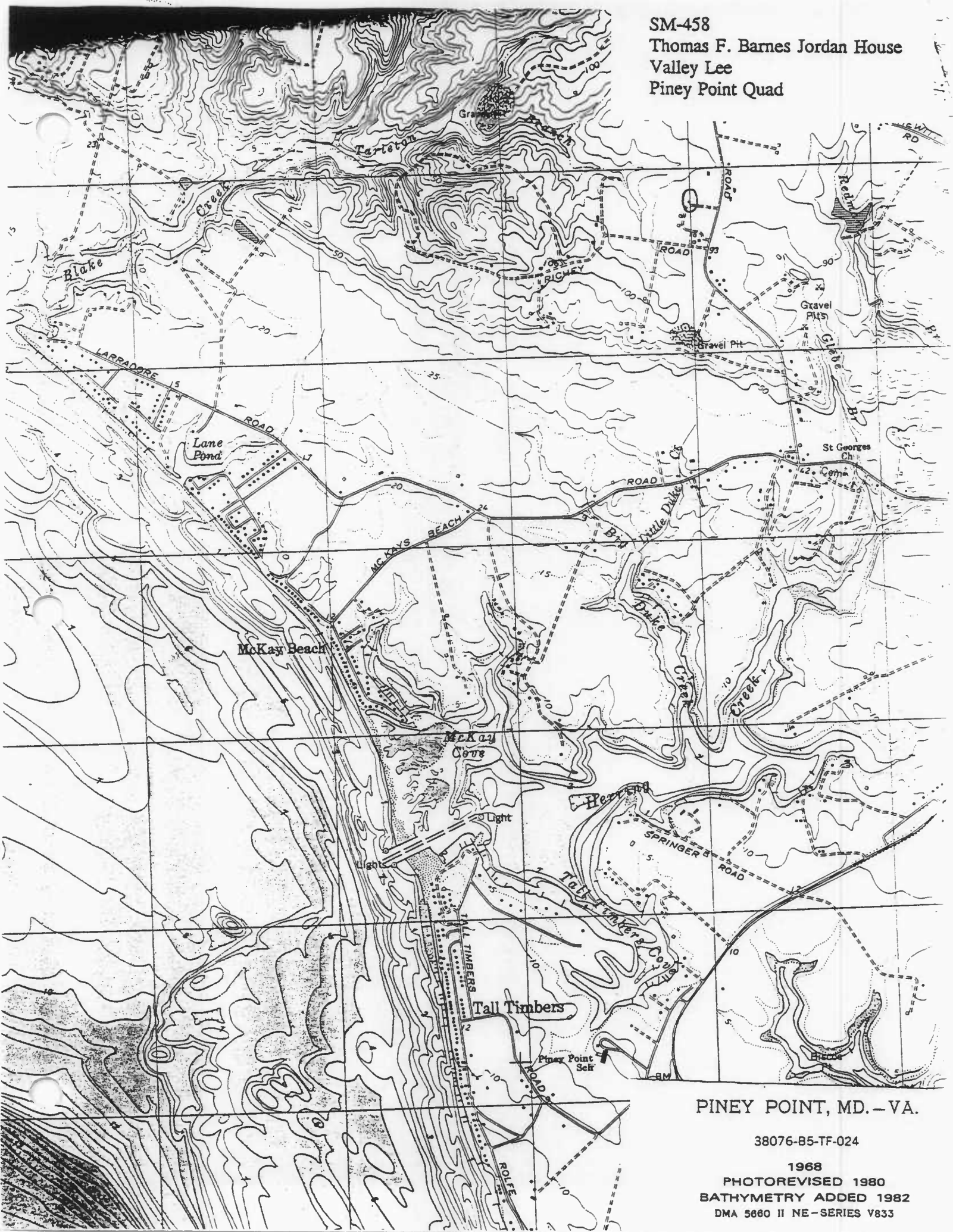
FROM: John S. Guyther and Sallie M. Guyther

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JTB 2, folio 469.

DATE: September 11, 1857.

NOTES: Transfer of a part of a larger tract called "Bennett's Delight" being 60 1/7 acres.

SM-458
Thomas F. Barnes Jordan House
Valley Lee
Piney Point Quad



PINEY POINT, MD.-VA.

38076-B5-TF-024

1968
PHOTOREVISED 1980
BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
DMA 5660 II NE-SERIES V833



SH- 453

Thomas F. Evans Indian House

St. Mary, Conn. MD

E. Hughes

1/14

MD. SUPD.

SE elevation

1/7



SM. 458

Thorne. E. Avenue. Jackson House

A. Mary + Carolyn

E. Hughes

11/14

HD - 102

Sub elevation

2/7



SH-158

Thomas J.

St. Mary's County, MD

E. Hughes

11/94

MD SHPO

Outblags

3/7



-M-458

Thomas H. Jones, Jr., Justice, Monroe

St. Mary's County, MD

E. Hughes

1/14

MD SHPO

outlet - 2nd and granary

4/7



SM- 458

Thomas F. Barnes, Justice of the Peace

St. Mary's County, MD

E. Hughes

" 1st

MD 21150

Historic photo

2/7



SM-458

Thomas F. Brown, Jr. 1911-1912

St. Mary's County, Md.

E. Hughes

17/11/11

MD. 1911-1912

Historic photo

6/11



EM-493

Thomas R. Ewing, Foxboro House

St. Mary's, 12-13, 1876

F. Hughes

1/94

1876-1880

Historical photo

7/7